

YOU'RE INVITED TO APPLY

due date: September 11, 2009

To: MMSD Instructional Staff

Re: **Classroom Action Research (CAR) 2009-2010**

Themes: C.A.R. groups are offered around the following themes (see p3 for details)

- * Dual Language Immersion*
- * Relationships, Engagement & Learning (REaL) in High School*
- * Universal Design & Differentiated Instruction*
- * Adolescent Literacy Interventions*
- * Nurses' Group: Promoting Wellness in Student & Staff*
- * Midvale-Lincoln Out-of-School Practices in Literacy & Math*
- * serve as a mentor for STAR: Student Action Research (high school)*

MMSD'S COMMITMENT TO ACTION RESEARCH: As we face the demanding daily life of our schools and work to ensure the success of all of our students, it is challenging to find time to come together to reflect on meaningful issues that impact our classrooms. MMSD has a long-standing commitment to action research, an important element in the high-quality work of our staff, and national reputation for our work in this area. Over the past two decades, over 600 staff have pursued action research in order to better understand and change their own practice. This is a remarkable record and a testimony to all who have participated in and supported this work. See www.madison.k12.wi.us/sod/car/carhomepage.html

WHAT IS ACTION RESEARCH? Action Research is a process in which educators examine their own practice systematically and carefully using the techniques of research. Participants design a research question, collect data throughout the year, analyze what they have learned, and write about their findings. Observations, interviews, surveys and journals are typical data methods that participants use to investigate their questions. Action Research is based on the following assumptions:

- Educators work best on problems they have identified for themselves.
- Educators become more effective when encouraged to examine and assess their own work and then consider ways of working differently.
- Educators help each other by working collaboratively. *(Heidi Watts)*

HOW IS ACTION RESEARCH A POWERFUL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EXPERIENCE?

In order to effectively implement school change, people must have time to reflect on the implications of the new directions and connect what they are learning to the context in which they work. Participants in action research groups discuss their practices in depth, learn from what others are doing, collect data about what they are studying, and document what is making a difference. The "action" implies that researchers do something differently in their practice or in their school on behalf of students. People pursue their own research question as the year unfolds, but they also learn about others' questions in an informal discussion setting. Collaboration, inquiry, and reflection are at the core of this powerful staff development process.



WHAT KIND OF TIME COMMITMENT IS INVOLVED?

CAR groups meet each month for 3-4 hours. **Participants must make a commitment to their learning and to the rest of the group by attending all of the meetings.** In addition, individuals work on their own time to develop their research projects and write a paper about what they have learned. At the end of the year, everyone participates in the June 1 CAR Forum at the Goodman Community Center to share their work with other action researchers from across the district.

WHAT HAPPENS AT THE MONTHLY MEETINGS? Participants learn about different stages of the CAR process while investigating their individual or collaborative research questions. At each meeting, everyone has time to talk about their research question and the progress they are making. Group members use reflective questioning techniques to help each other think more deeply about their work, and writing is also a central part of the process.

MONTHLY RESEARCH GROUP MEETING DATES and TIMES: Your commitment includes monthly facilitated meeting times, which happen during and/or after the school day at a central location outside of school. Subs are provided for daytime meetings. In addition to the monthly meetings, individuals work on their own time to develop their research projects, and attend the June 1 CAR Forum to share their work with other action researchers from across the district. Meeting locations are to be determined. Information and directions will be provided prior to first meeting.

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE? Participants can include classroom teachers, administrators, support and specials staff. Groups typically have 8-10 participants, and 2 co-facilitators.

MEETING FACILITATORS

Each group will have two experienced co-facilitators who are enthusiastic about supporting you through the process of action research and will share introductory information and background materials at the first meeting so that you can map out the year and get started on identifying a research question.

CREDIT & PI-34

- Participants have the option of earning UW-Madison graduate credits (Dept of C&I) as either a special student or a student currently enrolled in a graduate program. "Special Students" enroll for a reduced fee of \$100/credit—a great bargain. This 3-credit CAR course is listed in the second semester timetable. In order to earn UW credit, participants must participate fully in all meetings, complete all assignments on time, and meet UW enrollment and registration deadlines.
- Instead of UW credit, participants may earn Professional Advancement Credits (PACs) for afterschool meetings and independent work done on their projects outside the contract day.
- Classroom Action Research can be part of your Professional Development Plan.

HOW IS ACTION RESEARCH FUNDED?

CAR is funded from a variety of district budgets. Ken Zeichner, Associate Dean of the UW-Madison School of Education, has arranged with MMSD for the special reduced UW credit rate.

HOW DO I GET MORE INFORMATION? Please call **Mary Klehr**, CAR Coordinator (204-6717), with any questions. A number of your colleagues have done action research in the past, so also feel free to ask them for information about the experience. See the CAR website for lists of past topics, participants, and study abstracts: www.madison.k12.wi.us/sod/car/carhomepage.html

HOW DO I SIGN UP TO BE PART OF THIS GROUP? There are two steps: 1. **enroll online** via the Madison Virtual Campus <http://staffdevweb.madison.k12.wi.us/improve>; and 2. **fill out and return the last page via email to Mary Klehr by Friday, September 11, 2009.**

CLASSROOM ACTION RESEARCH TOPICS 2009-2010

Action Research begins with a question or a puzzle. Sometimes people come to the first meeting with a specific research question in mind, but this is not necessary; a key feature of the process is having time to develop a thoughtful, challenging question that is of interest to you. During the 2009-2010 year, CAR participants are invited to pursue projects in the following theme areas:

DUAL LANGUAGE IMMERSION (co-facilitators: Ann Niedermeier and Sara Huse)

Dual language immersion (DLI) is a model of additive bilingualism with sustained and enriched subject area instruction in two languages with the goal of developing cross-cultural understanding as well as bilingual/biliteracy skills in both a minority and a majority language. Participants in this group will explore characteristics of an effective DLI program and classroom instructional practices. They will have an opportunity to read literature on the topic, observe DLI classrooms, and compare/contrast with their current practices in dual immersion, bilingual, or ESL instructional settings.

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|--|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Sept (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 4. Dec (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 7. March 18 Thurs * 7:45am-3:00pm |
| 2. Oct 26 Mon * 7:45-11:45am | 5. Jan 6 Wed * 7:45-11:45am | 8. April 7 Wed * 7:45am-3:00pm |
| 3. Nov 20 Fri * 7:45-11:45am | 6. Feb (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 9. May (date TBA) 4-7pm |
| <i>Note: Substitute coverage is provided for the daytime meetings.</i> | | 10. June 1 Tues * 4:15-6:15pm CAR Forum |

RELATIONSHIPS, ENGAGEMENT & LEARNING in HIGH SCHOOL

During the 2009-2010 year, REaL CAR group participants will engage in lively, thoughtful discussions and create projects around relationships, engagement, and learning for a diverse population of learners at the high school level. Sue Gorud and Kolleen Onsrud will co-facilitate.

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|--|---------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sept 18 Fri * 7:45-11:45am | 4. Dec 16 Wed * 7:45-11:45am | 7. March (date TBA) 4-7pm |
| 2. Oct 26 Mon * 7:45-11:45am | 5. Jan (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 8. April 8 Thurs * 7:45am-3:00pm |
| 3. Nov (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 6. Feb 25 Thurs * 7:45am-3:00pm | 9. May (date TBA) 4-7pm |
| <i>Note: Substitute coverage is provided for the daytime meetings.</i> | | 10. June 1 Tues * 4:15-6:15pm CAR Forum |

UNIVERSAL DESIGN and DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

Universal Design for Learning is a research-based framework for designing curricula from the outset that enable all students to gain knowledge, skills, and enthusiasm for learning by simultaneously providing rich supports for learning and reducing barriers to the curriculum, while maintaining high achievement standards. Differentiated Instruction is a teaching theory based on the premise that instructional approaches should vary and be adapted in relation to individual and diverse students. Because not all students are alike, this requires teachers to be flexible in their approach and adjust the curriculum to learners rather than expecting students to modify themselves for the curriculum.

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|--|-------------------------------|---|
| 1. Sept 14 Mon * 7:45-11:45am | 4. Dec 14 Mon * 7:45-11:45am | 7. March (date TBA) 4-7pm |
| 2. Oct (date TBA) * 4-7pm | 5. Jan 15 Fri * 7:45-11:45am | 8. April 8 Thurs * 7:45am-11:45am |
| 3. Nov 2 Mon * 7:45am-3:00pm | 6. Feb 17 Wed * 7:45am-3:00pm | 9. May (date TBA) 4-7pm |
| <i>Note: Substitute coverage is provided for the daytime meetings.</i> | | 10. June 1 Tues * 4:15-6:15pm CAR Forum |

ADOLESCENT LITERACY INTERVENTIONS

Focusing on the specialized needs of adolescent students struggling with literacy, participants in this group will rethink classroom structures and assessment, and investigate strategies to implement literacy interventions for our most school-dependent learners within inclusive classrooms. More details forthcoming.

Nurses' Group: PROMOTING WELLNESS IN STUDENTS & STAFF

Health office staff interested in exploring the MMSD Wellness Policy together and forming actions and practices that impact well-being in schools are invited to participate in this group, which will be co-facilitated by Sara Parrell & Sally Zirbel-Donisch, PSTs for Nurses. Monthly meetings will take place from 4-7pm, day of week to be determined.

Midvale-Lincoln: CHILDREN'S OUT-OF-SCHOOL PRACTICES in MATH & LITERACY

In this group, Midvale-Lincoln staff will explore students' out-of-school practices ("funds of knowledge") in math or literacy and identify ways to build on these practices in the classroom. Participants will have an opportunity to read literature on the topic, compare methods for learning about out-of-school practices, share what they learn, and brainstorm ways to build on the practices to support learning in school. This group meets after school and each participant will also have 2 half days of sub coverage for independent work time. Lori Gustafson, Anita Wager, and Cathy Compton-Lilly co-facilitate. Tuesdays from 4-7pm on Sept 15, Oct 20, Nov 17, Dec 15, Jan 19, Feb 16, March 23, April 20, May 18, June 1.

2009-2010 Classroom Action Research APPLICATION
(SEND APPLICATION STATEMENT & INFO to MARY KLEHR
via Groupwise or Midvale school mail by Friday September 11, 2009)

I am applying to be part of the following Classroom Action Research group:

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|--|--|
| ☐ Dual Language Immersion | ☐ Adolescent Literacy Interventions |
| ☐ Relationships, Engagement & Learning in High School | ☐ Nurses' Group: Promoting Wellness |
| ☐ Universal Design & Differentiated Instruction | ☐ Midv-Linc Out-of-School Math & Literacy Practices |
| ☐ Mentor for STAR: Student Action Research | |

Application Statement:

I have read the attached information and am interested in participating in the above 2009-2010 Classroom Action Research group because:

Name:

School:

Grade/Subject:

email:

phone:

☐ I have enrolled in "Classroom Action Research (CAR) 2009-2010 through the district's Madison Virtual Campus: <http://staffdevweb.madison.k12.wi.us/improve>

- * Click Fall Course Offerings
- * Skip this step if you have already registered to use MVC: Click on the Register button to get a user account for Madison Virtual Campus. Once you register you never need to again (be sure to use your correct MMSD email address and only copy the letters and numbers when you are sent your validation code - no spaces)
- * Click on Professional Learning Catalog and log in to view fall courses.
- * Find *Classroom Action Research (CAR) 2009-2010* and click on "details" then "add to cart". You will be asked to click on "check out" twice.

☐ I agree to participate fully in all 9 monthly sessions, complete the CAR process, write a paper, and participate in the annual CAR Forum on Tuesday June 1, 2010.

☐ I have received permission from my principal to leave school to attend daytime meetings.
Principal Name:

☐ I will need substitute coverage to attend daytime meetings.

☐ I have participated in MMSD CAR in the past.

9/1/09mrk